



## Teaching English as a Second Language

The process of finding overseas employment when in the Foreign Service can sometimes feel overwhelming. One option that many family members consider as they create an employment strategy, is teaching English as a second language while overseas. According to the Family Liaison Office surveys, this is the number one field in which family members work outside the mission and can be a good option for a portable career. Below is a list of resources and tips for getting started.

### Resources from the U.S. Government

As part of an effort to develop understanding of American culture, the U.S. government supports a variety of English language initiatives that can provide potential employment opportunities as well as a place to start gathering information networking.

- FSI's Transition Center offers a course titled [Portable Careers: Employment Options \(MQ706\)](#). This one-day class discusses various portable career options, adaptive skills of individuals who have been successful in portable careers, applicable regulations and types of business structures to consider when contemplating entrepreneurship.
- The **Office of English Language Programs (OELP)**, implemented by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, is responsible for English teaching support activities outside of the U.S. There are many free resources available on their site including all issues of the [English Teaching Forum Journal](#).

OELP has also sponsored the creation of the video-based training series for English language instructors: [Shaping the Way We Teach English](#).

20 [Regional English Language Officers \(RELO\)](#) support the OELP's program activities around the world. If you are located in a country with a RELO, learn about his/her activities. See if you can work on a volunteer or paid basis for him/her in order to gain experience. Click here for a list of RELO locations:

- No OELP office near you? Check to see if your embassy or consulate **Public Diplomacy section** has an American Corner or an American Center where English classes are conducted. You may find work there. They also may have copies of publications about the U.S. that you can use for your lessons as well as copies of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.
- In Latin America there are also several **bi-national centers**. These independent, autonomous institutions receive support from the U.S. Government to promote English language learning and cultural understanding and can also be a good place to seek a volunteer or paid teaching position.

- Contact the **Peace Corps** office in your country. Ask if you can use their library, which typically has an extensive collection of locally-appropriate materials.
- [Voice of America \(VOA\)](#) also has excellent English teaching materials, including on-line activities, lessons, articles, podcasts in basic English, and lesson plans for ESL teachers.
- The [Library of Congress' website](#) has content on American culture and ideas for lessons under the "Teacher" section.

## Other Resources

- [TEFL.com](#) - summarizes what you need to get started.
- [TEFL.net](#) - also provides information about certification.
- [Dave's ESL Café](#) is a virtual meeting place for ESL & EFL teachers and students from around the world.
- [Transitionsabroad.com](#) - includes a work abroad section dealing with English teaching.
- [Esljobfeed.com](#) and [teach-english-jobs.com](#) - lists English teaching jobs around the world, broken down by region. The latter also provides TEFL certification.
- [Ispeakuspeak.com](#) - hires English speakers to teach online to clients around the world. There are many other sites like this one. Be judicious in selecting an organization online.
- [Tesol.org](#) - teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is an organization with an online community and information on how to get certified.
- [Iteslj.org](#) - the Internet TESL Journal features conversation questions, activities, games, and jokes.
- [Englishclub.com](#) and [teflgames.com/games.html](#) - includes a variety of English language game ideas.
- [Eslmania.com](#) also has activity ideas for teachers.
- The most widely recognized certificates are from Certificate in [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages \(CELTA\)](#), [School for International Training \(SIT\)](#) and [Trinity](#).

## Tips for Effective Teaching

- Determine why your students want to learn English. Make class content relevant to their needs and styles – especially important for adults.
- Determine your students' education level. (Can they read? Do they know the parts of speech?)
- Ensure that all students are given a chance to practice new skills. Play lots of games, sing, and vary your activities. Make it fun.
- Create a theme for each week with a relevant vocabulary list.
- Do something active with your class. Go shopping, share a meal, visit a museum, go to a farm.
- Start a youth club for ESL teens.
- Check out companies in your city that teach business English to executives at their offices or start your own. Hourly teaching rates tend to be higher for executive services.
- If you enjoy teaching English, consider getting certified online or in-country. This will help you increase your income.
- Ask the embassy to inform you if there will be an open contract position teaching English to Locally Employed Staff at the embassy.

**Important:** The Family Liaison Office provides information as a public service. Resource links DO NOT imply any endorsement of accuracy or quality of services.